NICKERSON FANS

The Board of Directors approved the Nickerson Fan as our official color chart. A quantity of the fans have been purchased and members may have them for the sum of $5.50 plus postage for an overseas mailing.

If you are interested in obtaining one just drop the Executive Secretary a check and he will see that one is in the mail at once.

-oOo-

WELL KNOWN HYBRIDIZER VISITS

Mr. Ross H. Gast, one of the top hybridizers in the American Hibiscus Society, was a recent visitor to the state of Florida. He spent time with friends in the Ft. Myers, Punta Gorda area and then motored to Winter Haven. There he visited two of the past presidents of the AHS, who, along with Mr. Gast, were charter members of the organization.

From Winter Haven he drove to Orlando and Daytona Beach visiting friends and nurserymen along the way. Then he sampled the fine food at a Spanish Restaurant in Tampa and visited our President, Mrs. John Wylie.

The whole trip was completed in three days as he had to return to Los Angeles to prepare for his return to England.

It is very inspiring to have the opportunity to be with a man who knows so much about Hibiscus. Wish he would move to Florida.

-oOo-

A famous movie cowboy was taken to the hospital with severe burns. That's what comes from making love on the range.

-o-

One thing you get by patting yourself on the back is a lot of elbow room.

NATIONAL ARBORETUM HIBUSCUS RESEARCH

by Donald R. Egolf, Cytogeneticist,
U. S. National Arboretum, Washington 25, D. C.

During the past season much progress was made in the Hibiscus research project at the U.S. National Arboretum. Hibiscus syriacus, L. which is of limited interest to the southern enthusiast of cultivars of Hibiscus rosa-sinensis, L. was emphasized. Nearly fifteen thousand seedlings from controlled crosses and self- or sib-pollinations are growing in the nursery. A number of these seedlings flowered, but it will be another season before selections are made and numerous rogues are discarded. Growth was exceptionally good and many April-germinated seedlings were three feet tall in November.

The colchicine-treated seedlings provide possible material for future extension of the program to include the semi-tropical H. rosa-sinensis. The chromosome complements of H. syriacus (2n = 80) and H. rosa-sinensis (2n = 92, 144, 168) differ greatly; therefore hybrids probably cannot be obtained. Numerous polyploid forms have been selected from colchicine-treated H. syriacus populations. If a tetraploid with 2n = 160 can be found, the probability of hybridization with H. rosa-sinensis would be greatly increased. Polyploid H. syriacus plants have firm petals, and large, heavy-textured leaves that closely resemble those of H. rosa-sinensis. Should these polyploids prove to be a bridge between the two species, the color range of H. syriacus might be extended to the yellows and reds, whereas that of H. rosa-sinensis might incorporate the blue pigments as well as other desirable ornamental characteristics.

It might appear that the problem is resolved but the preliminary study is only a start in one possible direction to achieve the ultimate goal. The chromosome complements, sterility, propagation, and culture of seedlings encompass a multitude of problems which may be relatively simple or most complex. Although

(Cont'd on page 17)